

BUILDING BUSINESS BY CHARLES N. CREVDSON

BUSINESS VS. A PROFESSION

"Straight Talk" by Manager of a Big Wholesale House to His Youngest Son, John, Just Out of University—Older Sons Struggling in the Professions—Insists That John Shall Take a Year's Study in His Own College, the "University of Hustle"—To Go on the Road as Helper to Salesman.

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CHAPTER I.

THE manager of a large wholesale house sat in his office. He had started to rustle for himself at the age of twelve in a little country store. By hard work he had made himself the acting head of a large wholesale firm and held in the vault a big slice of the company's stock, juicy in dividends.

When he had to quit school and go to work he was just beginning the third part of arithmetic and a simple volume of United States history. He would have had a much larger slice of the firm's stock had he been a disbeliever in race outside and had he not felt that all of his seven sons should have a university education and training for some profession.

As the old man read his mail, his youngest son, John, who only that morning had returned from nine months at the university, came into the office. The old man was fond of his children and especially loved his youngest son. Although a man of business the veteran was genial in his make-up; he was democratic; he felt himself as good as a supreme court judge and no better than the elevator boy.

John was togged in the latest fashion—on each foot a shoe the shape of half

a yacht, trousers freshly creased and rolled up at the bottom, straw hat, the band of which emblazoned his Greek letter fraternity colors. In one of his gloved hands he carried a walking stick—in the other his Ph. B. degree he had just got at Harvard. The old man was so glad to see John that he hugged him when he came into the office.

"Well, you've got your degree, John?"

"Yes, father. Here it is. I'll show it to you."

John took an initial silver cigarette case out of his pocket, lit a coffin nail with a wax match, and, slipping the bow knot of the blue ribbon tied around his degree, rolled his sheepskin out upon the old man's desk.

"Hm, hm—you finally got it, John. Read it to me."

John began mumbling over the Latin words on his Ph. B. degree, coming soon to his own name, "Joannis Carolinus Witherpoon."

"Oh—hold on there with that stuff, John, this Joannis Carolinus business; give me the John-Charley of it. I want you to talk to your old dad in the straight American language. I don't know anything about that stuff."

Then Joannis began to stammer over his translation of his Latin sheepskin. He made such a botched job of it that the old man soon blurted out:

"Well, never mind what it is just as long as you've got it." Then, like a business man, having brought one deal to a head the old man started in on another and turned to Joannis with the remark:

"Well, now look here, John; you are a man now. You are twenty-one years old and have this here degree, what are you going to do?"

"Well, after I have my vacation, father—"

"Vacation, h—! You haven't had anything but vacation since you were born and you haven't given a vacation to your mother and me since I used to walk you nights to keep you from howling. Now you've been through school and got what you wanted—you know I was kind of half a mind not to give you this last four years anyhow—now what are you going to do?"

John was togged in the latest fashion.

"Well, father, I don't know just exactly, but I thought I'd like to take a post-graduate course and get a Ph. D. You see, I have only a Ph. B."

"Ph. D? Umph! Well, there's only one letter between B and D. Don't you think you've gone about far enough? As it is you can't read the one you have. What's the use of getting another?"

"Well, you see, father, the Ph. B. nowadays is just sort of a starter. You must have the Ph. D.—that is, a doctor of philosophy degree; the Ph. B. is only a bachelor of philosophy degree—before a college man will recognize you as having done anything."

"College nothing! What do I care about what college men think of you? They aren't going to support you. Why, the poor beggars hardly get

enough to eat. I've been out to receptions with them myself. One night a couple of young professors got their hands against some fresh paint before they came into the house where the reception was. When they took off their spiked-tail coats and rolled up their sleeves, why, confound it! although it was 22 degrees below zero, those fellows were wearing minnow-skin underwear. I don't care what a man who can't wear flannel next to his hide when snow is on the ground thinks of you. I want you to have a stand-in with the substantial men of the country."

"Now, I tell you, son—you've spent eight years in the grade schools, four years in the high school, had a special tutor for another year to get you ready, and have put in four years in the university. Of course this is all right. You aren't spoiled yet, and if

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you have your head set to it good and hard to take up a profession after a while, all very well and good! But look ahead—I am just now sending away—yes, see these checks—a hundred dollars each to two of your brothers. One of them has been practicing law for four years and Doctor Witherpoon has had his sign out for over two years. They're both writing to the old man to send them money to pay their house rent. The only ones I don't have to put up for right along now are Ned, who too k up electricity, and Sam that's a mining engineer—and neither one of them right now is making as much as my average traveling salesman.

"Of course, I say, if you want to become a professional man, that's all right. But I'll tell you, my son, the lawyers and doctors get only a few grains of corn that fall through the cracks; the business man owns the crib, full of corn. I've kind of got this professional man idea out of my head. I had it good and hard when your older brothers were growing up—but if you want to do something of that kind, that's all very well and good; but, do you know, I've kind of got it into my head that a business man is a professional man. Why, my buyer here in the silk department must know a whole lot of things, technical things at that, too—and I don't see why he's not just as much a professional man as the fellow that yanks a tooth out of your head. Why, my traveling salesman is a professional man. They have to study their business. It has cost me a good deal of money to find out that the young fellow starting out on the road has a whole lot to learn."

"Now, maybe you would like to take up a profession that none of your brothers have stooped to, and become a business man. Of course I say if you wish to do any one of these other things and don't agree with me, you shall have that liberty and I'll spend a thousand a year on you for four years more. But, before you do that, I'm going to have my say for just a little while. I want you to spend at least one year in the school that I've been going to for half a century. I want you to put in a little study in my college—the University of Hustle."

"It seems to me that this so-called higher education, which is little more or less than the reading of good books, should be the pleasure picked up in leisure hours of the business man. Why, I've seen one of my friends here in Chicago get into a taut with a lot of professors on subjects of history, religion, philosophy and literature and nearly skin them in argument; and I'm shot if I don't believe that he has a better 'education,' as you call it, than any professor I ever met. And you know that your old dad himself isn't such a slouch when it comes to books, eh, son?"

"But here! This is Monday morning and two days' mail to go through. You run along out now and see your mother. You can take one day's vacation with her, but tomorrow morning you show up here with me, at 8 o'clock. One of my traveling men has just told me that the young man who packs his trunks has got wise and is going to go out on the road on his own hook for a month or so. He needs a good live boy to help him along, and I guess I'll just turn you over to him for a few trips."

(Chapter 2, "Faking vs. Good Goods" Will Appear in Next Sunday's Issue.)

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY of "FUNERAL JIM," HOBO --- A Tramp Passing Through Halts to Tell the Tragic Comedy of His Life

(Continued from Page 1—This Section.)

\$14. 'Frisco' took the money, put it with that which the rest had collected and after taking out his share, and a big hunk for the reserve fund kept to pay fines and get the members out of trouble, divided the rest up between the men. My share was something over \$3.

Leading the Simple Life.

"We stayed with 'Frisco' until the bulls got wise, and copped the bunch. Frisco got jugged, and those that got off all scattered except Fatty, myself, and those three that are with me now. We decided to cut out the grafting, and confine our work to legitimate begging—it ain't so dangerous."

"You know that work of Frisco's, too, was a little to much like stealing, and I ain't a crook. As it is now, we goes over the country seeing all sorts of things, living high, and don't have to do any work. Of course now and then we gets pulled off a freight and have to spend five or ten days in the work-house of some little town, but that's only when things gets going so good that we gets careless. Besides, time ain't no object with us, and sometimes, in the winter, we're mighty glad to get caught. In the summer, when it comes to solid comfort, we've got you folks skinned to death. Houses is close together, we have ways of knowing what's doing inside, there's plenty of fruit for the picking, and when we get tired, why there's always a haypile handy where you can roll up and sleep as long as you please. If we gets tired of one place, why we moves on to another."

"There's nobody that can tell us where to get off. We hoboes are the only people on earth that are our own bosses. Our friends is the best, too, for any one of my buddies will divide their last cent with me. Any hobo will help another one—we stick together. Don't ever think either that just because a man's a hobo he's a fool. 'Hot Air Brown' over there, was in Cornell University for two years, got fired, and has been bummin' it ever since, but say, he can spiel some when he wants to. There are plenty of others, too, who hum it because they like the life. I'm one, I've been hitting the pike, counting the time I spent with 'Frisco Slim,' for more years than I've got fingers, and I'm satisfied. I wouldn't trade with anybody."



"A gathering of the Clan."

"This bunch that you see here is the same bunch that's been going it for a long time. We're the same old crowd and we're all here except Fatty. Where's he? Oh, he got tangled up with a freight car and is laid up for repairs in a hospital down in Memphis, Tenn. He'll join us again as soon as he's able. How'll he find us? Don't you think we know how to write and do you think we forget a pal like Fatty when he gets laid up?"

Willing to Take a Drink.

At this point Funeral Sam wiped his forehead on a disreputable coat-sleeve, cleared his throat and let out an oath.

"H— but it's hot," he ejaculated. "So much talkin' made me dry. What's the prospect of your buyin' what? No joints in Anacostia? What are you givin' us? Honest? Well, how about lending me the price of four big ones? my buddies have to come in, of course. Two bits would go nice."

The "two bits" were forthcoming, and pocketed with a laconic "thanks," said he, as he thoughtfully fingered the quarter, "until we get across the bridge. No, I ain't got just yet. It's too hot, and so much talkin' has made me tired. Guess I'll crawl inside the car and take a snooze. Well, so long."

With these words he ambled off in the direction of his companions who had disappeared within the car fully half an hour since.

A few hours later the four tramps, all sound asleep, were discovered by an employee of the railroad company, and unceremoniously bundled out of the car. They took their ejectment good-naturedly and rubbing their eyes started across the river in search of

a joint in which they could get rid of the "two bits."

Such is the life of the average hobo. "Something for nothing," is their motto. No matter where their lines may be cast you will find them wearing a grin which may be a little rueful, but which may also be translated, "What's the odds?"

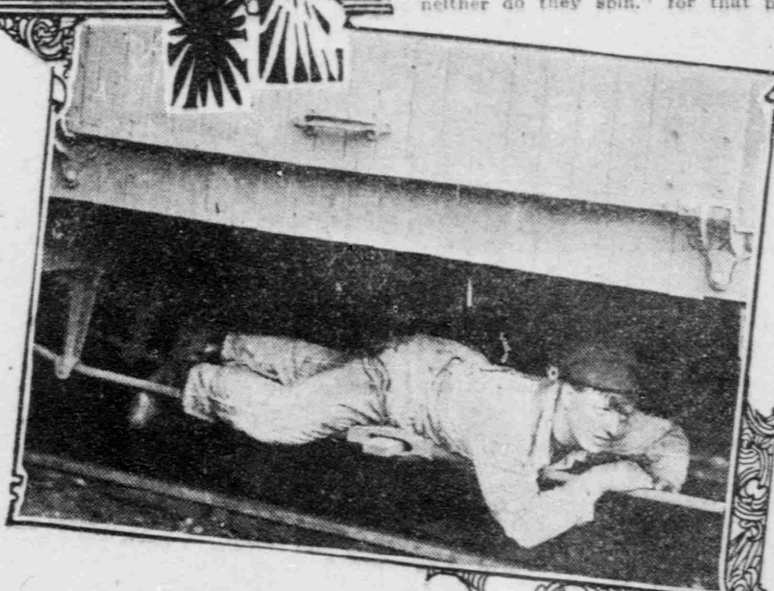
Ragged, unkempt, and dirty, but never miserable, they adapt themselves to whatever circumstances in which they may find themselves, making the best of everything with an unconscious philosophy which is worthy of a higher station than they will ever reach.

Diogenes spent his life in an unavailing search for an honest man, but to-day contentment seems to be even more desirable. If this be true who will gainsay that the existence of a tramp is, in a certain sense, to be envied?

Moving Upon Washington.

Just at this time the weather in the Northern States is too unsettled and uncertain, and until the weather prophets see fit to hang up the balmy weather sign to stick for a series of months we may expect to have the "heer do wells" as our fellow-townsmen. Residents of the Virginia and Maryland hamlets contiguous to Washington and outlying districts of the city already have ample evidence of the fact that the city is to have a tramp convention or convale within the near future, and the front and rear gates look as though expert wood-carvers had been busy with them.

The roadmen have a code of signals by means of which they inform one another of the presence of dogs in yards, and also tip off the fact that the housekeeper is easy or close-fisted. In addition to these the tramps have many other signals, which they scratch on the gates and fences, and if they chance to come upon a place where the wrong sign is shown, they lose no time in scratching it off and carving the correct one in its place.



"Riding the Rods."

It does not mean much to the average good citizen who works in an office all day and then goes home to spend the evening with his family, but to the tramp, whose only thought is of getting something to eat and a place to lay his weary bones without exerting any of his surplus energy, it signifies the housewife is good for the "limit." In other words, a good square meal can be had for the asking, and in addition the woman will fix up a little "snack" to be eaten at some future time. If the tramp wants to shake off his winter garments for spring attire all he has to do is to ask. All this and more is conveyed to his mind by the mystic sign on the gate.

BXX is quite different. This sign means so many horrible things that the tramps usually take to the woods at first sight of it and do not linger to ascertain whether the carver has made a mistake or a different family resides there since the BXX was engraved. This might mean any number of fierce things that are handed out to the inoffensive, unobtrusive tramp, but it is usually taken to signify that the visitor must be beware because

there is a dog on the premises and the housewife is not at all stingy with hot water when tramps appear at her door. These two are sufficient to frighten off the average hobo, but some are from the good old State of Missouri, and the experience of others who have gone before gives birth to no caution on their part.

Strong Matter of Doubt.

The letter Z, followed by a question mark, implies doubt on the part of the transcriber as to the absolute desirability of the house as a stop-over place. In the vernacular of the gentleman of the road, it says the place is always "good for a hand out," but that the inmates are curious and ply the applicant with questions.

Hoboes are rarely at a loss for a good yarn with which to repay their victims, but as a rule they don't like to do it.

No matter what the reception of the men who resemble the flies of the field, but solely in that "they toll not, neither do they spin," for that par-

ticular reception there is a mark, and this mark is invariably placed on some part of the premises where it will be seen. A semi-circle, a quadrant, the letter X, figures, and numerous hieroglyphics, which are no less like the inscriptions of the Abyssinians than those used during the reign of the pyramid builders, are continually being employed to convey warnings, news of an indifferent nature, and statements that are calculated to mentally transport the hobo who reads them into the fields of Elysia.

The marks of signs are never inscribed on a place where they would be apt to be erased, or defaced. Indeed, such care is exerted in finding a suitable place, that the owner of the residence is rarely aware of the fact that he is a marked man. The marks, nevertheless, are there, and while they may escape the eyes of the resident, it is the business of the tramp to find them. To the latter they are all im-

portant, for on them depends his mode of procedure. Consequently, before directly approaching the house he makes a careful scrutiny of the fence, trees, and grounds, with the result that, when he knocks on the door or rings the bell, he usually knows just what to expect.

Sometimes these bedraggled birds of travel "hit the pike," as they characterize their wanderings, singly, but such occurrences are rare. As a rule they love and require companionship, and wander through the country in groups of three, four, and five. Although in the course of their wanderings they traverse every State in the Union, from Maine to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, they rarely, if ever, have any particular destination in mind. Their travels are governed by only four rules; the South in the winter, the North in the summer, large cities in cold weather, and small towns and the country at the first signs of spring.

Some Strange Book Marks

SOME of the things we find in books, put there for markers, are funny enough to take the edge off the humorist's libel on the human race.

Drum monotony of our lives," said a librarian in a Carnegie branch, to a writer for the New York Tribune. "Of the ordinary things that people use for markers, such as hairpins, spectacles, combs, tooth brushes, false teeth plates, and handkerchiefs, we find something like a half bushel a year, and by reference to the numbers and cards return them to their owners. But when we find a full poker hand, with a blue chip in it, as was done in this very branch only yesterday, we can't help but wonder what kind of a genius it is that guides the footsteps of the absent-minded beggars who read books."

"I'll give you a partial list of the things we find in books. I picked out of a sentimental novel the other day a Government bond. It was in a treatise on how to bring up children that I found the poker hand. Evidently the father had been taking a hand in the

management of that household. In an exposition of Henry George's single tax theory I found a \$30,000 mortgage. Socialism evidently did not seriously trouble the reader of that book."

"Some one who had read 'Forty Ways of Making Money,' or something of a similar title, had used for a bookmark a summons to a suit for a tailor bill. A student of 'How to Play Bridge' found last Sunday's Bible class leader a good bookmark. In a history of art was found a holder used in the kitchen for handling hot dishes. I found in a book on charity and the workings of numerous charitable institutions a note from a poor tenant begging a few more days in which to pay her rent. I was interested enough in this book to look up the last borrower of the book. I found him to be a man known all over the city for his wealth and philanthropic enterprises."

"More than one librarian has played the part of Cupid and by the repression or the speeding on their way of notes found in books has reunited several affection bonds. A young man of some nineteen summers had the habit of returning her books at night and bringing along with her a young man, who took great interest in helping her select her reading. I watched the courtship grow from the 'Autocrat of the Breakfast Table' through Poe's tales and poems and 'Lorna Doone' to Shelley, Keats, and Heide."

"The ring appeared when they brought back Mrs. Browning's 'Sonnets from the Portuguese.' But one night little Miss Reader appeared alone and did not take out a book. Her eyes were red and there was every indication of showers. I took the book, and on looking it through found a letter. The envelope was unaddressed, and I had a perfect license to open it. It was as I thought. A dance, a quarrel, a tearful night, and a decision that it was 'all over between us.' The note ended with a command to send back all letters, photographs, and love tokens."

"I knew well enough where that letter should have gone, and had it been an ordinary case I would have sent it on its way, as I have done in hundreds of others. But once I wrote a note in haste—that was a good while ago, however—and I have never forgotten it. I did not forward Miss Reader's note, and in five days she came back all wreathed in smiles, with her young man by her side. The note was about two years. A month ago she brought back a book on the care of children, and I haven't seen her since."

"These are only a few of the things which serve to brighten the dull gray life among the stacks, but they serve to show you what can be got out of even a humdrum work."



"Asleep at the Switch."